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ABSTRACT

Intended to help teachers who want to offer their students the best native American literature, this paper analyzes a selection of books written by and about native Americans, in particular the Navajo Indians. The criteria used to select materials for the paper include historical accuracy, cultural accuracy, idealism versus realism, and reader interest. The books are arranged into the following categories: (1) autobiography; (2) oral history and autobiography; (3) literature written by anthropologists; (4) books written by educators, Bureau of Indian Affairs officials, and trading post workers; and (5) books by other authors. (FL)

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR JUVENILE READERS

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR JUVENILE READERS

Introduction

Because of an increased awareness of ethnicity and an awakening interest in ethnic studies on all levels of education, many books and stories about Native Americans have been incorporated into the curriculum of secondary schools. With the aim of generating a better understanding of the various minority populations in the United States, there has been a glut of new publications on the market as well as a massive reintroduction of older works. This can present a confusing and frustrating situation to teachers who want to offer the best materials to their students but do not know what to look for or even where to begin to look.

In an effort to alleviate this problem, this paper surveys and evaluates some of the literature (fiction, biographies, autobiographies, and historical novels) written by Native Americans and/or about Native American experiences.

Because of the major author's teaching experience in a public school on the Navajo Reservation, and her work as an anthropologist, the works selected for inclusion are those geared mostly toward young people of junior and senior high school ages with varying levels of reading ability. For the most part, the selected works focus on portrayals of the Navajo.

The following criteria are those which were considered most important in assessing the worth of a sample of books about Native Americans, and were used as the basis for evaluation.

1) HISTORICAL ACCURACY. Rearranging names, dates, and places to create a mood or make a point is not uncommon or undesirable in literature. Artistic license becomes undesirable when it is used as an excuse to avoid comprehensive research and produces false or prejudicial results.

2) CULTURAL ACCURACY. While the accurate portrayal of a Native American society is extremely important, it is more important that the general ambience of a culture be captured accurately than to describe for instance the complex organization of lineages within the Navajo clan system. In literature, as in all aspects of life there is a need for truth, however this does not necessitate the book reading like an ethnography.

3) IDEALISM vs. REALISM. Within this category sexual, age, and racial stereotypes will be considered. Indians do make noise when they walk in the woods, some more than others. The per capita number of alcoholics among Native American populations is very high, but not all Indians are alcoholics. Not all old Indians are wise or understand the cosmic truth. Many Indian people listen to and enjoy popular and classical music, not just pow-wow songs. Mystical idealism can do almost as much harm as does hard core bigotry. There is often a fine line between realism and idealism, yet gross misrepresentation is unnecessary.

4) READER INTEREST. If a book is historically and culturally accurate, if it portrays a realistic view but it is not

interesting or exciting, the only thing it will do is collect dust. It is natural to want to be entertained and a good book can be a great method of entertainment as well as a method of painless education.

Historical Perspective

Volumes written about or including American Indians have been common sights on library shelves since the first Europeans contacted the Caribbean peoples in the late 15th century. Spanish chroniclers wrote vivid accounts of the varied Native American cultures as they explored and conquered the Americas from California to Peru. The French, who occupied territory in Canada and what was to become the Midwest United States, related stories of their experience with the Indians as they built their trading networks. The British contributed to this slowly growing body of knowledge as they explored the Eastern Seaboard under the command of men like Sir Walter Raleigh and Captain John Smith. Later, Americans such as George Rogers Clark and Meriwether Lewis, who explored the ever-expanding territory under U.S. control, as well as the early pioneers, contributed not only to the technical knowledge of these cultures but also to the popular lore growing up around them. They brought to some people's attention the need to document the obviously vanishing life ways of an often unpopular and rarely understood group of people.

There were several ways in which the interest in American Indians manifested itself. Thomas Jefferson, for example, whose studies in far-ranging fields is legendary, wrote often about

work and experience he had had with American Indians. Jefferson's crusade to enlighten the thinking men of his era about Indians lasted for most of his life and has been documented on numerous occasions.

> I am safe in assuming that the proofs of genius given by the Indians of North America place them on a level with whites in the same uncultivated state. The North of Europe furnishes subjects enough for comparison with them, and for proof of their equality, I have seen some thousands myself, and conversed much with them, and have found in them a masculine, sound understanding . . . I believe the Indian to be in body and mind equal to the white man (Foley, 1900).

Although a statement such as the above would be considered totally unacceptable today, for his time, Jefferson was quite liberal and a staunch supporter of ethnographic, linguistic, and archaeological research. He defended the status of American Indians after learning about theories by men such as Georges de Buffon, a French naturalist who maintained that natural habitat and climate powerfully influenced the condition of animals and men, and that the environment of the New World was such that it had stunted the growth of its inhabitants both mentally and physically (Malefijt, 1976). If Jefferson's many works have been dismissed because of a prevalent Rousseauean idealism, there were many others such as Lewis Henry Morgan, a 19th century anthropologist whose scholarly works have continued to be used as basic reading material for anthropologists and historians interested in early post-contact Native American culture (Malefijt, 1976).

Another manifestation of interest in American Indians comes in the form of fictional literature. By the mid-to-late 1800's,

as the call of the frontier led people to colonize the already indigenously inhabited areas of America's west, friction grew between those who wished to live in the region and those who already did. Even though by the time of the Plains Wars in the late 1800's the problem of eviction was an old story (having been enacted in the Southeast with the other groups including the so-called Five Civilized Tribes), the challenge presented by the mounted bison hunters of the high plains and prairie sparked the imagination of some and the hatred of others. A rash of dime novels depicting the Indian as either a bloodthirsty savage with little in the way of humanity, much less civilization, or as the "Noble Savage," was loosed upon the unsuspecting eastern populace. Stereotypes which grew during this period are still with us and have, unfortunately, for many years infected the area of children's literature. Many of these stereotypes have been successfully removed from more recent works by people educated in the field of Indian history and culture, yet many of these stereotypes will continue, with others to be added, until writers, teachers, and parents care enough to see them changed.

This is not meant to imply, however, that only recent works are devoid of stereotypes and that any work published prior to the recent emergence of ethnic awareness is worthless. Many books were written before and shortly after the turn of this century that continue to stand as monuments of understanding, compassion, and the intelligent portrayal of Indian people.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL EXAMPLES OF NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

Two examples of literature which have stood the test of time, written by Charles Eastman, a Santee Sioux, are Indian Boyhood (1902) and From the Deep Woods to Civilization (1916).

Eastman, who was raised by relatives in Canada in a traditional manner, relates those early years in the autobiography, Indian Boyhood. When he was fifteen Eastman was taken by his father to the United States where he received a B.A. from Dartmouth College in 1887. He then went on to receive his Doctor of Medicine from Boston University, and Bachelor of Laws from Columbia (Henry, 1972). The struggles Eastman encountered during his years in the United States are examined in From the Deep Woods.

Both books are easy to read and although written in a style of prose that might seem stilted to the modern reader, they relate the sensitive story of a young man who endeavored to overcome unbelievable odds to succeed in an alien world. If Eastman's first book (Indian Boyhood) is somewhat apologetic concerning his native culture, by the writing of From the Deep Woods to Civilization he no longer felt the need to qualify his actions and reveled in his ability to draw from childhood lessons to make his life in the Anglo world easier. Both of these books have been available for many years and have been read and enjoyed by numerous children and adults since they were first published. Yet they are sometimes overlooked by educators. All too often it is assumed that "new is better." In some cases, especially

concerning children's literature, this holds true, but it is an assumption that is unwarrented in the case of Charles Eastman's works.

KAY BENNETT

The autobiography, Kaibah (Bennett, 1975), tells of the childhood of Kay Bennett, a Navajo woman whose childhood name was Kaibah and who grew up on the Navajo reservation in New Mexico. The story, which encompasses the period from 1928 to 1935, describes the everyday life of a Navajo girl and of those events which were important to her, such as visits to the trading post, weddings, and ceremonials. Included are some of the myths and legends told to her as a child. It is a pleasant book, neither boring nor exciting, but is worthwhile reading. Because the book was published by the author herself it is somewhat difficult to obtain.

ORAL HISTORY/AUTOBIOGRAPHY

One work which is not an autobiography in the strictest sense is Geronimo: His Own Story (Barrett, 1970). The work was dictated by Geronimo to S. M. Barrett while Geronimo was being held as a prisoner of war at the Ft. Sill Military Reservation near Lawton, Oklahoma.

The story begins with Geronimo's recitation of a portion of Apachean cosmology and concludes with his hopes for the future of the Apache people in their relations with the United States Government.

Because Geronimo was not locked into a strict sense of Indo-European chronology (from past to present to future in a linear fashion), the book may appear to ramble from one time period to the next without reference to dates or time. Each chapter of the book is a unique event in itself and these events do not blend in such a way as to make a flowing story. The rambling quality of many passages and the lack of a strict chronology are common to most people who come from an oral tradition rather than a written one.

With any effort at all, however, this rambling quality presents no problem to the reader and the rewards for reading the book are great. This book must be recommended to anyone interested in an alternative view of the Apache Wars and the Bedonkohe band of the Chiricahua Apache.

NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE WRITTEN BY ANTHROPOLOGISTS

As stated earlier, interest in American Indians may be expressed in scholarly works or in works of fiction. However, it is often the case that one person will produce both. This has been true of anthropologists who, after having written great scholarly tomes for their colleagues, find it desirable to share their knowledge with young people in the form of novels or stories. Oliver LaFarge, Alice Marriott, and Gary Witherspoon are all anthropologists who have either written stories based upon their field experiences or work, or have, as in the case of Gary Witherspoon, helped collect and edit stories for young people about Indians. In Children's Literature, Rudman (1976) comments

> The adequate research that most authors attempt to do in order to validate their stories is particularly important in the case of books about the Native Americans. Not only should the details be accurate but also the values conveyed in the test should reflect as closely as possible the attitudes of the real-life counterparts of the characters. If the author is not a Native American, then perhaps consultants could be located to authenticate the text.

This kind of attitude has been popular with anthropologists for many years. The data many anthropologists gather while in the field are based on a technique in which a strong rapport is built between the researcher and one or more primary informants. Through months and often years of study, the anthropologist learns as much as humanly possible, to view the world as do the people with whom s/he is studying.

OLIVER LaFARGE

Oliver LaFarge offers a classic example of this type of writing. While conducting research on the Navajo Reservation in the 1920's for his masters thesis in anthropology, he gathered data and insights about the Navajo that were later used in his Pulitzer Prize winning book, Laughing Boy (1929). LaFarge states in his introduction

> This book is a work of fiction. I have tried to be as true as I knew how to the general spirit of Navajo things, to customs and character . . . I have been as accurate as possible about ceremonies, rites, and customs. If occasionally I have taken liberties, I plead a writer's privilege. Any innovations I may have made are none the less true of the general pattern of Navajo ideas (LaFarge, 1929).

From the author's personal experience and from the popularity and acceptance of the book among Navajo children, LaFarge's portrayal of Navajo life and customs in the early 20th century

is accurate and poignant. A faint trace of idealism toward Navajo culture may be detected but on the whole his work is realistic and interesting. It must be remembered, however, that the world has changed dramatically since the time of the book and it can therefore not be used as an accurate description of current Navajo lifestyles.

ALICE MARRIOTT

Another anthropologist who is noted for writing children's books is Alice Marriott. The material she used for many of her novels was a product of extensive fieldwork in southwestern Oklahoma among the Kiowa, a southern Plains tribe. In one of her later works, Indian Annie: Kiowa Captive (1965), she describes the life of a young girl captured by a Kiowa man to replace a daughter he had lost to disease. In Indian Annie, Marriott uses her vast knowledge of Kiowa ethnography to relate accurately everything from typical diet, material culture and major ceremonials, to the linguistic problems Annie encountered when trying to learn the Kiowa language. The close ties of an extended family, common to Plains tribes, is conveyed as well as the respect men have toward women, which is often missing from books written about Native American boys.

Although it has been suggested that "assimilation should not be the goal or the happy ending" (Rudman, 1976), it is in fact, a major motivating force in Indian Annie.

> In other books I have tried to show the life of the rebellious Kiowas who resisted the changes white men brought in their lives. In this one I have tried to show what happened to those Kiowas who took the peace road and tried to adjust to the new ways that were introduced to them (Marriott, 1965).

There have been many books written that have viewed the assimilated Indian as a "good Indian," and have painted pictures of an Indian's success in terms of the prevailing Anglo-American criteria. Obviously this cannot be true of the attitudes of all Native Americans in the past or present, yet conversely, not all Indians wanted or were able to resist the encroaching and dominant society. It would be a grave error for writers to present a biased view of Indian assimilation and acculturation by paying lipservice to the presently more popular liberal attitude toward Indian resistance to assimilation.

Just as in the past the only "good Indian" was a peaceful one, we cannot assume today that the only "good Indian" was a member of a group of people who fought encroachment to the bitter end. The stories of both can be sad, but accuracy and honesty must be the key to education. Children's intelligence must not be underestimated by providing simplistic approaches to complex problems. If children, especially teenagers, are to understand the world around them they must be made aware of the problems confronted by Native Americans in the past as well as the present, and the alternative ways in which the solutions to these problems were approached or are being approached.

GARY WITHERSPOON

Gary Witherspoon, an anthropologist most noted for his work in Navajo linguistics, collected and transcribed, with Sydney M. Callaway, a beautiful book of essentially easy-to-read short stories called Grandfather Stories of the Navajos (1974). The

book is divided into three categories: mythological narratives, historical accounts, and descriptions of meaningful aspects of Navajo culture such as medicinal plant classification. For an Anglo child not acquainted with the Navajo language, the book could be frustrating because the Navajo name for many things is included in the text.

> They gathered four precious stones (nitɬ'iz) from the four directions. They got turquoise (dootɬ'izhii) from the east, abalone (diichiɬ'í) from the south, white shell (yooɬgaii) from the west and jet (bááshzhinii) from the north (Callaway, Witherspoon, et al., 1974).

The obvious reversed bias of the book is somewhat refreshing and explained in the foreword.

> Grandfather Stories is a book prepared primarily for Navaho boys and girls. However, we firmly believe that it can contribute significantly toward a broader understanding among all people and can be used successfully with non-Navaho students (Callaway, Witherspoon, et al., 1974).

The use of written Navajo in the text will leave the monolingual English speaker tongue-tied and the child whose primary language is Navajo delighted as they read these stories which include "Diné Bizaad" (glossed as "The People their words" or as an English speaker would say, "Navajo language").

NATIVE AMERICAN BOOKS WRITTEN BY EDUCATORS, BIA OFFICIALS, AND TRADERS

Anthropologists are not the only non-Indians (in actuality there are Native American anthropologists) who are acquainted with Native American culture and as a consequence write about it. Teachers, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) officials, and those who work in or own trading posts have, with varying degrees of success, written books for children about Indians. Included in

this group are Lynne Gessner, Margaret Embry, Ann Nolan Clark, and Geraldine Hall.

Lynne Gessner

Lynne Gessner, author of Navajo Slave (1976), was described in a short biography at the end of her book as a Cuban-born American who grew up in Central America and spent time during her teenage years at a trading post on the Navajo Reservation. The short biography further explained that it was those years that inspired her to do a "thorough study of the Navajo Indians" which produced Navajo Slave.

Gessner, however, appears to have been less than thorough in her research about the Navajo and none too realistic in her interpretation of what it was to be a slave. Many problems crop up throughout the book, but the one most obvious is her apparent lack of understanding of the Navajo language.

The plot of Navajo Slave presumably centers on a young Navajo boy named Straight Arrow, who is taken captive by a Ute slaver and sold to a Spanish encomendero (landowner). Straight Arrow's ability to immediately and completely understand Spanish is explained by a short passage in the first chapter.

> At the mention of slave traders, Straight Arrow remembered his Uncle, Tale Teller. Years before Straight Arrow's birth, a Ute had captured this Uncle and sold him to the Mexicans as a slave. Straight Arrow remembered the day he had returned after sixteen years in the silver mines--a quiet, frail shadow of a man who had told tales of incredible horror. It was thus that the family had learned the language of the Mexicans both to hear and speak, because Tale Teller after his return spoke more easily in the foreign tongue than his own (Gessner, 1976).

It is a rather naive notion on Gessner's part to assume that a captured slave, upon his return would choose not to speak the language in which rests his grammatical competence. No doubt it would take several months for the Navajo man to get accustomed to speaking his own language again, but serious doubt arises that the years he continued to live with his family would have been spent speaking the pidgin Spanish he would have learned in the silver mines rather than his native language.

Although this is only a small point, Gessner seems not to understand the complexity of the Navajo language and the total alien structure it has when compared to other Indo-European languages. The conversations that Straight Arrow was to hear and understand in the first few hours of his captivity would have taken even the most gifted polyglot several months of intensive training to understand.

Another problem with this book is the fact that although it is supposedly about the Navajo boy, Straight Arrow, the major action of the story centers, after his capture, on the Spanish family who owns him. It is unfortunate that even in a book about an Indian, Straight Arrow must take a back seat to his Spanish owners. All in all, Navajo Slave, though not overtly biased, remains one of the lesser works of Native American juvenile literature.

Margaret Embry

Men and women who are hired to teach in schools which have a predominantly Native American student population often begin

with little or no understanding of the culture or even the tribal affiliation(s) of the children they teach. It is not unusual for many of these teachers to leave after a year or less in disgust and/or disillusionment. However there are those that, even though ignorant of Indian cultures when they begin, make a concerted effort to learn about and become acquainted with the sociocultural atmosphere in which their students live. Margaret Embry, who taught in a BIA school in New Mexico and who has done graduate work in bilingual education at the University of New Mexico, wrote Shádí (1971), a book which is, with several words of caution, recommended to new teachers who come to the Navajo reservation for the first time. Shádí is the Navajo word for "my older sister." As Embry explains, an older sister is a special person in the Indian family, and Emma, shádí in this book, takes her role very seriously (Embry, 1971).

One word of caution given to adult readers about this book concerns the teacher portrayed in the story. Although Embry hints at the culture shock that many Anglos experience when first immersed in the Navajo culture, the book does not relate the trauma that often accompanies this experience. The teacher in the story, after a brief period of time, actually less than a semester, had made strides into the understanding and total acceptance of the Navajo way of doing things that would in actuality take much longer.

As is often the case with children's books, interaction between characters is idealized to such an extent that one forgets

that honest communication between students and teachers, especially those from two different cultures, takes hard work and infinite patience on the part of both. For example, time is required for one to become accustomed to someone not making direct eye contact. And for the child, it is even harder to understand why eye contact is considered a necessary rather than a rude gesture.

Another word of caution warrants mentioning. Occasional overtones of religious "preachiness" are apparent which reflect Embry's upbringing in her home town of Salt Lake City, Utah.

> "Yes," her mother said in Navajo, looking past out the window. "Things are going pretty well with me. I not drinking wine any more. Or coffee. Those missionaries are coming around talking to me. I think maybe I will join their church." (Embry, 1971.)

Although references to "those missionaries," who are mentioned only a few times in the book can be irritating, apart from this Embry does bring out very real problems such as alcoholism that many Navajo families face in the rapidly changing world on the reservation.

ANN NOLAN CLARK

Ann Nolan Clark, the author of many books written for children and teenagers about North and South American Indians, as well as textbooks for Indian schools, was employed by the BIA for twenty-five years. During this time she worked as both teacher and school supervisor (Clark, 1963; Rudman, 1976). Even though her writing style has been termed somewhat "patronizing" (Rudman, 1976), her books are very popular with Navajo and Anglo students alike.

Blue Canyon Horse (Clark, 1954), a short story written for young readers, is about a mare who runs away from the boy who owns her to join a herd of wild horses. The style of writing is more like free verse than prose and lends an interesting, very Navajo-like cadence common to translated Navajo prayers and chants, to the syntactic structure of her sentences.

> Something wild is calling in the night time.
> It is calling in the shadows.
> It is calling through the canyon.
>
> She runs
> like the wind before the storm,
> like the gray mist before the dawn,
> like the cold before the sun. (Clark, 1954).

Little is mentioned to identify the book as one about an Indian pony. Rather, the essence of the story, the philosophy of the people, and the illustrations delimit its subject matter.

On a more difficult level, but still suitable for elementary students is the publication, Little Navajo Bluebird (Clark, 1943). Once again the syntactic structure of the sentences spoken by the characters has a very Navajo-like quality. This style, however, does not work as well as in Blue Canyon Horse, and produces stilted dialogue. But this is a minor problem and is compensated for by the rest of the book which is entertaining and informative. Because of Clark's work with the BIA, certain passages of the book concerning education and the Area Office of the BIA are not surprising. These passages reflect the optimism found in many of the Bureau's employees during the period in which John Collier was Secretary of the Interior (Coffer, 1979; Collier, 1975). At this time the views of the BIA

were ultimately assimilationist, but tempered with the belief that Indian people themselves should be allowed to determine the rate at which they would become part of mainstream American life.

Another of Clark's books, for more advanced readers, is Medicine Man's Daughter (1963). By comparing this book with the others, one can detect a more polished writing style, with most of the awkward dialogue gone, which makes the characters seem more real. However, the idealism and desire for intelligent and carefully considered change is still present. This book, which concerns a young girl's painful quest for knowledge in two worlds, has been used as a reading text for ninth grade students in several predominantly Indian public schools in New Mexico.

GERALDINE HALL

Geraldine Hall, a reading teacher at the BIA school in Many Farms, Arizona, and her teaching aid, Irvy Goossen, wrote Kee's Home (1971) as a beginning Navajo/English reader. However, even though this book is aimed primarily at young Navajo students, it is far too enjoyable to exclude from a secondary classroom. Kee's Home can contribute a certain degree of cross-cultural understanding for students not acquainted with Navajo culture. The illustrations, by Vera Louise Drysdale, alone make the book worth buying.

The purpose of the book is to provide a language bridge to English for a monolingual Navajo child. In her foreword, Goossen explains

> While the Navajo child is learning to read in his own language, he will be seeing the corresponding English

> word on the same page. This association at the beginning of the reading process should make the transition to reading English an easier much less awesome procedure (Hall, 1971).

The text is written in both Navajo and English. The Navajo is at the top of each page printed in black, the English in the middle printed in brown. Although this kind of physical presentation may be construed as "echoing," a concept opposed by Willink (1973), it is a minor problem at best. In fact, it may help a child to realize that reading is an information getting process, whether in Navajo or English, not just a way to learn English or to produce acceptable grammar (DuBois, 1979).

There have been a number of Navajo-English primers written for classroom use. One of the first organized efforts was undertaken in the late 1930s and early 1940s, sponsored by the BIA. A major stumbling block arose when it was discovered that simple stories written by English speakers lost all their simplicity when translated into different Native American languages (Fuchs and Havighurst, 1972). Because of this, Hall and Goossen were careful to use only those words which could be translated into Navajo with little loss in meaning (Hall, 1971).

The story centers on a Navajo boy named Kee and the people, places, animals, and events that fill his everyday life. Kee's family: his sister Bah, his younger brother, his mother, and his father, are portrayed as a traditional Navajo family. All the members of the family contribute in significant ways to the survival of the group in a harsh environment. Both Bah and Kee herd the family sheep and goats as well as help their mother with

domestic tasks. Being a shephard is a major part of Kee's life as it will also be for his brother when he grows up. When Kee talks to his baby brother lying in a cradle board he promises: "We will herd sheep. We will herd them with horses" (Hall, 1971). The mother's contribution is in the home. She is shown weaving, cooking, gathering firewood, and caring for the baby. Father works outside the home, drives a pickup, wears a cowboy hat, and plays with his children after the evening meal. This traditional division of labor could be seen as somewhat sexist. However, the importance of each person's jobs are underscored by the equal emphasis given to them in the text.

Kee's dog and horse are important in his life and provide a large part of the story. They are shown as pets, both in an Anglo-American sense, and as working animals, something more akin to the Navajo concept of animal-human interaction.

As outstanding in its class as Kee's Home is, there are some flaws. In many ways this story is "Dick and Jane are Navajo." Dick has become Kee, Jane is Bah, even Spot the dog and Puff the cat have their counterparts, Shep and Bah's cat. Mother doesn't wear an apron and bake cookies, rather she wears velveteen and makes frybread. One may sense a feeling of déja vu when reading about Shep/Spot managing to steal some frybread/cookies from Kee/Dick.

An unfortunate omission in the story is the lack of any mention of Kee's extended family. In today's traditional Navajo society, one's grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins

are as much a part of the primary family unit as the nuclear family. While it may be unrealistic to expect a detailed description of Navajo kinship in a primer, the complete exclusion of the extended family is rather glaring.

At the end of the text is a glossary which includes a list of all the words introduced in the story and a guide to the pronunciation of Navajo vowels and consonants. In most cases there are phonetically similar English equivalents to the Navajo alphabet. Ascending and descending tones, nasalizations, and glottal stops, though not phonemes in English, are explained in brief passages.

OTHER AUTHORS

Bernard Wolf

The Navajo reservation and its people have been a major subject of photographs since cameras were invented. The stark beauty of this area has often been caught by the lens of the talented photographer. In Tinker and the Medicine Men (Wolf, 1973), the combination of excellent photography and an interesting story provide an exceptional method of communicating Navajo culture to young people. The text and the photographs, both by Bernard Wolf, depict one week in the life of Tinker Yazzie. The first paragraph of the book creates the special aura which surrounds this young boy and which is carried throughout.

> Tinker Yazzie is a Navajo Indian boy with a difficult ambition. He wants to become a medicine man like his father and grandfathers. Although he is only six years old, he is not too young to decide. He has already shown that he has an excellent memory, loves to learn new things, and has great self-discipline--qualities he will need in the long years of study ahead (Wolf, 1973).

Although Tinker's goal in life is very different from most of the Navajo children today, he is still a child. Through Wolf's photographs, Tinker is initially seen as a student finishing his first year of public school in Kayenta, Arizona. A most encouraging aspect of this book is the portrayal of Anglos, specifically Tinker's teacher. She is shown as accepting and understanding, but at the same time she is not a major focus in Tinker's life nor in the story.

After Tinker's last day of school, he and his family return to their ancestral home in Monument Valley to spend the summer. Even though public school is over, we realize that Tinker's education is, in fact, just beginning. The lessons to be learned from his mother and sisters concerning sheep herding and the very important aspects of his life which center on his ambition to become a medicine man which he learns from his father, are made both funny and awe-inspiring by the combination of the text with the photographs.

Before this book is read and in order not to be disturbed by the closing incidents, it must be understood that the Native American Church, whose membership includes the Yazzie family (Tinker's father is both a peyote priest and a traditional medicine man) is a strong, positive, and ever-growing force among Native American tribes. The final scenes of this book involve the preparation for and enactment of Tinker's first peyote meeting. When Tinker eats peyote, it should be explained to the student who is reading the book that peyote is used as a sacrament and is "a key that unlocks a door to God and lets us

see him more clearly," (Wolf, 1973) as Tinker's father explains to him.

The text of Tinker and the Medicine Men will probably be too difficult for any but the best readers to handle. The ideas presented in the book, if being read by a student not acquainted with Navajo culture, must be accompanied by explanations. It would be a mistake, however, for teachers to take these conditions as a handicap when considering whether to use the book in a classroom setting. It provides rather, an ideal base from which to form a topic in social studies for students from fourth grade through junior high school. Needless to say, this book is by far one of the best books about Native American experiences and is recommended for young or old readers.

In all areas of educational literature and fiction there exists the brilliant such as Bernard Wolf's Tinker and the Medicine Men, the mediocre, a category where Doris Shannon Garst's Crazy Horse: Great Warrior of the Sioux (1950) would fit, and the poor where one might place The Story of Crazy Horse by Enid Lamonte Meadowcroft (1954) and Cochise: Great Apache Chief by Enid Johnson (1953).

ENID LAMONTE MEADOWCROFT AND DORIS SHANNON GARST

Crazy Horse: Great Warrior of the Sioux (Garst, 1950) and The Story of Crazy Horse (Meadowcroft, 1954), both tell of the life of the famous leader, Crazy Horse, who resisted white domination until he saw no alternative but to submit, and who was murdered within a few minutes of his surrender. One major

difference between these two books concerns the reading level of each, with Meadowcroft's writing more appropriate for younger readers. Consequently, which is all too often a corollary to easy reading, the ethnographic detail is poor, there is stereotyping of women and their role in society, and the general imposition of white middle-class conventionalisms and attitudes onto the Oglala Sioux.

> Curly [incorrect gloss of Has-ka, an early name of Crazy Horse] watched her go, wondering what it was that she overheard. Messengers often came into camp from the Brules or the Minniconjous or other friendly tribes. And girls were funny creatures, always trying to make little things seem big. He was glad he was a boy (Meadowcroft, 1954).

Obviously it is easy in retrospect to point a finger at a book published in 1954 and cry sexism. However, students are still reading books such as this and are still being influenced by them in unfortunate ways.

In contrast, Garst's book, Crazy Horse: Great Warrior of the Sioux, which is not without its flaws, does present a truer picture of the life of Crazy Horse. The cultural detail is better and the story is not as entrenched in the philosophy common to Americans in the 1950's.

ENID JOHNSON

Cochise: Great Apache Chief (E. Johnson, 1953), is so unrepresentative of Native American culture as to be ridiculous. The following quotes are but a few of the minor irritants.

> Although it was late spring it was very cold on the mountain heights and Cheis was almost naked. But an Apache is never bothered by discomfort . . .

> Savage though he was, Chochise possessed certain qualities rarely found except in the most civilized people.
>
> For four days he lay ill, while outside his wickiup the medicine man moaned and wailed and shook his gourd and made his "medicine" to drive away the evil spirits who he believed were at work trying to kill his chief (Johnson, 1953).

The stilted speech, the qualification of the term medicine, by always putting it in quotes each time it is used, (e.g. Cheis Gets His "Medicine," a chapter in the book), the constant use of the term "squaw" rather than "woman," and the extreme oversimplification of the problems faced by Cochise might be excused, but one factor may not.

Although Cochise is portrayed as benevolent, infinitely wise, caring, and understanding; as in many children's books, the man Cochise is a larger than life figure: he is held in sharp contrast to the rest of his people. Enid Johnson evidently holds the Chiricahua Apache in low esteem and it is a point made clear from the beginning to the end of the story. She is appalled by the accepted behavior of the Apaches toward raiding, warfare, captives, and slaves, and makes clear that Cochise was not really like the other Chiricahua Apaches. This book is not only an example of the height of ethnocentrism and poor taste, but poor writing as well.

CONCLUSION

Admittedly, these are a miniscule sample of the juvenile literature about American Indians. The paper's bias, reflected in the number of works about the Navajo, can only be justified

by the major author's teaching experience in a Navajo reservation school. However, it is believed that the books reviewed are representative of general trends, both good and bad found in much juvenile literature about Native Americans.

Although this paper was specifically about the portrayal of Native Americans in literature, the criteria used to evaluate, i.e., historical accuracy, cultural accuracy, idealism vs. realism, and reader interest are important concepts when considering any type of educational literature.

It is hoped that the results of this analysis will provide a guide to anyone interested in helping young people broaden the definition of what constitutes the scope of "American culture," and to serve as a guide to help evaluate other works about Native Americans.

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